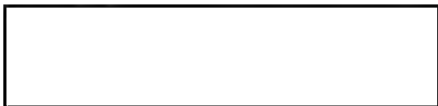


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21 June 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

**SUBJECT: Meeting with the Deputy Secretary of Defense on the
National Reconnaissance Office (NRO)**

1. The Director, accompanied by Mr. Bross, called on Mr. Vance in his office on 18 June at 1400 hours to discuss the reorganization of the NRO.

2. The Director opened the meeting with an exposition of his philosophy about the NRO which, he felt, should be a truly national institution serving the primary requirements of its various users in such a way as to best satisfy national interests. He pointed out that there were a number of current issues in dispute between elements of the NRO and elements of CIA. For example, the FY 1966 budget had never been reviewed in CIA. Mr. Vance agreed that this was deplorable and that projects should be approved and funds allocated by the Secretary of Defense and the DCI jointly. The Director also referred to the ISINGLASS project, which he suggested might illustrate parochial interests of the Air Force in the sense that the NRO was inclined to be skeptical about the project under CIA sponsorship but showed definite interest in its development under NRO (Air Force) management. The Director indicated his desire greatly to strengthen the NRO by providing adequate representation from the Agency and from services other than the Air Force. His belief is that, with genuine multilateral representation from all of the military services and CIA, and also NASA, and given good will and a real determination on the part of senior officials concerned (including himself and Mr. Vance), the NRP could be made to work.

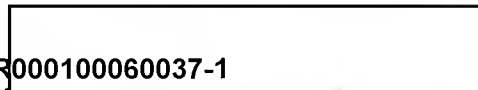
3. Mr. Vance agreed in principle with all that Admiral Raborn had said. He identified what he considered to be the essential elements of the new organization.

NRO review(s)
completed.

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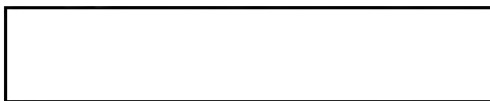
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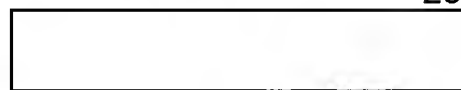
4. The first of these was an Executive Committee which should meet every two weeks on an agenda. Decisions of the Committee should be recorded and would serve as general guidance on matters of policy and as regards the allocation of responsibilities and funds.

5. In the research and development field, Mr. Vance believed that both the Air Force and CIA should be authorized to conduct research on design and develop conceptual studies with a view to promoting new ideas for systems. He felt that the cost of this activity might range from [redacted] a year on the part of the components involved. Mr. Bross suggested that it would probably be considerably less. Admiral Raborn indicated that it would be impossible to tell and would vary substantially from year to year.

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6. The development and production of new systems however, in Mr. Vance's view, should be the responsibility of the NRO which should take over the contracts and supervise the engineering, production and procurement phases of all new systems. Admiral Raborn pointed out that he had in mind the importance of ensuring control of development on the part of users of the system or systems under development. This would lead to an arrangement under which responsibility for the development of specific payloads could be assigned to any one of the services, including the Army, depending on who had the primary interest in exploitation of the system once developed. Mr. Bross pointed out that this was the crucial issue in the negotiations which had previously taken place between CIA and the Defense Department, and that the CIA position, as formerly presented to the Secretary of Defense, had included the proposition that CIA's participation in the NRP should include responsibility for the development, production and procurement of payloads which would be delivered to a launching authority under the Air Force (or NRO) control, which would be responsible for mating, launching and inflight control of the system. In order to be absolutely clear on Mr. Vance's proposal, two actual illustrative situations

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[REDACTED]

were examined. One was the CORONA program, which is presently operational and for which specific improvements are projected. The second was the new general search system, which will be selected by the PSAC Panel under Dr. Land's chairmanship. The question was how, under Mr. Vance's proposal, these two situations would be handled. Mr. Vance said that he felt that CIA should continue to be responsible for the ongoing CORONA system and its improvement. He believed that responsibility for the development of the new search system should be given to the NRO.

7. Admiral Raborn asked Mr. Vance about the location of the D/NRO and Mr. Vance said that he should report directly to the Secretary of Defense. For the time being, however, he should continue also to be an Under Secretary or Assistant Secretary of the Air Force. The point was made that this was simply a continuation of the present arrangement, the wording of the present agreement providing that the D/NRO shall report directly to the Secretary of Defense and spend a considerable portion of his time on the NRP. Mr. Vance recognized the problem but said that under appropriate direction and supervision, he thought that the D/NRO could function objectively and that a face saving device was called for. Mr. Vance said that an arrangement under which the systems command of the Air Force was made responsible for launches and other Air Force reconnaissance activity, and under which both the Air Force and CIA were coordinated by a qualified individual operating directly under the Secretary of Defense would not be acceptable. This is because of concern that such an arrangement might give the Air Force too much power.

8. Mr. Vance then raised the issue of the SOC. He said that Gene Fubini had various objections to the transfer of the SOC to Langley and suggested that a briefing be arranged to explain the precise function of the SOC. He said that he felt the Agency responsible for the operation of the program should control the SOC. Admiral Raborn agreed but pointed out that he was responsible for the

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intelligence mission of the satellite operations and that the SOC was required to support this responsibility. Mr. Vance agreed that the DCI and USIB are responsible for establishing the intelligence mission of satellite operations and the scheduling and targeting of individual missions. He was under the impression, however, that the SOC performed an over-all service in the determination of the orbital plan and was not limited to delineation of intelligence objectives. It was agreed that there would be a briefing, at which the specific function of the SOC would be explained.

9. It was agreed that after resolution of the SOC problem, a new draft agreement would be prepared for consideration by the Director of Central Intelligence and the Secretary of Defense.

10. After the meeting, Admiral Raborn advised Dr. Wheelon and  of the substance of the discussions at the meeting and the areas of agreement which had been reached.

/s/ John A. Bross

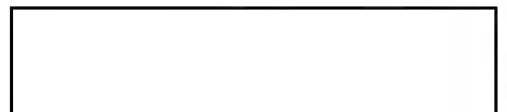
JOHN A. BROSS
D/DCI/NIPE

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